

Book review

The Management of Sexually Transmitted Diseases: A guide for the general practitioner. R R Willcox, 1979. Pp 79, tables 9. WHO Regional Office for Europe, Copenhagen (price not known).

The foreword to this admirable little book starts by pointing out that in Europe, as in other parts of the world, most patients suffering from sexually transmitted diseases are treated in general practice by physicians with inadequate training in the management of such diseases. As a result they may pay insufficient attention to the need for laboratory investigations in making a correct diagnosis and for contact-tracing. This book has been prepared to fill this need on the recommendation of the World Health Organisation and is published by the WHO Regional Office for

Europe. While it is primarily designed for general practitioners, it will also be useful for aspiring specialists and will start them on the correct lines for managing their patients.

The common clinical presentations of the sexually transmitted diseases are clearly and concisely described, and the appropriate laboratory investigations are discussed in some detail. Practical advice is given on treatment, contact-tracing, and follow up.

There is a very useful section summarising the management of patients presenting with specific problems such as urethral discharge. In this, the options for management are listed in declining order of efficiency. It is suggested that the general practitioner should assess his or her own practice and capabilities and seek to improve them if necessary.

The final section summarises the drugs used in the treatment of the sexually transmitted diseases.

This book is a most useful addition to the range of concise publications on this subject, and fulfils the resolution of the 31st World Health Assembly, which requested the director-general of the WHO to "draw up, disseminate, and up-date as required guide lines on the control of sexually transmitted diseases." The book reflects Dr Willcox's wide clinical experience, his teaching experience, and his capabilities as a writer on this subject. It will be valuable in all countries where English is understood, and it is published in French and in Russian. I hope the crispness and clarity of the text will be maintained in these translations.

R N Thin